

the story of

JW



1886

- 1961

75 Years in Edmonton

JOHNSTONE WALKER LIMITED



Edmonton's
Own
Store
Since
1886



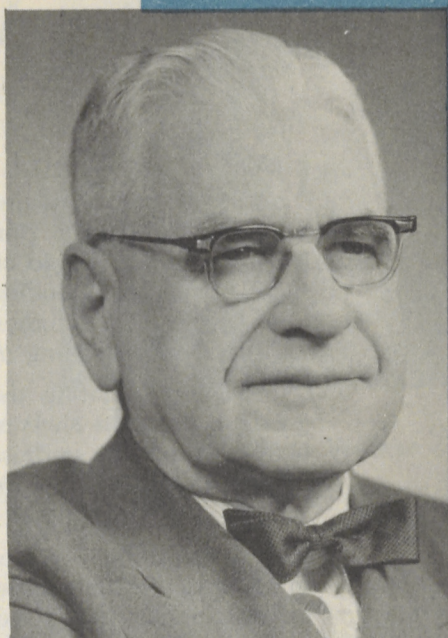
JOHNSTONE WALKER LIMITED
EDMONTON - ALBERTA

foreword

1961 is a very special year for Johnstone Walker, commemorating our three-quarters of a century of service to the people of Edmonton and the surrounding areas. It has been said that Johnstone Walker is an Edmonton institution. If this be true, I am proud of it. Seventy-five years ago Mr. W. Johnstone Walker placed his faith in Edmonton and since that time the people of Edmonton have reciprocated that faith. For that, I would like to say, with heartfelt sincerity, on behalf of all of us here at Johnstone Walker's, "Thank you, Edmonton, for seventy - five wonderful years."

Becile Sutherland

PRESIDENT



The First Venture

IN THE EARLY FALL of 1886, a train of ox carts wended its plodding way across the plains toward the tiny community of Edmonton, accompanied by the raucous shrieking of wheels turning on wooden axles long since devoid of grease after the rough trails and hundreds of miles of seemingly endless prairie. Piled high with goods brought overland from Winnipeg, these Red River carts carried, too, the high hopes and dreams of a young man from Edinburgh.

Eagerly awaiting the arrival of the wagon train which bore the goods to stock the shelves of his new store, W. Johnstone Walker looked to the future with enthusiasm, for here in Edmonton he felt that at last he had found the place to make his mark on the world of business.

Born in Edinburgh, Mr. Walker had first travelled to the Orange Free State in South Africa and tried his hand at farming before coming to Canada. Farming proved too rugged for his delicate health and he arrived in Edmonton shortly after the North-West Rebellion of 1885, determined to find a field of endeavour suitable to his needs. Here under the bright blue skies of the West, he met and became firm friends with John A. McDougall, a pioneer Edmonton businessman, who persuaded him to enter the retail business. Mr. McDougall, even though he was in opposition, offered to buy goods for him on his next trip to the East.

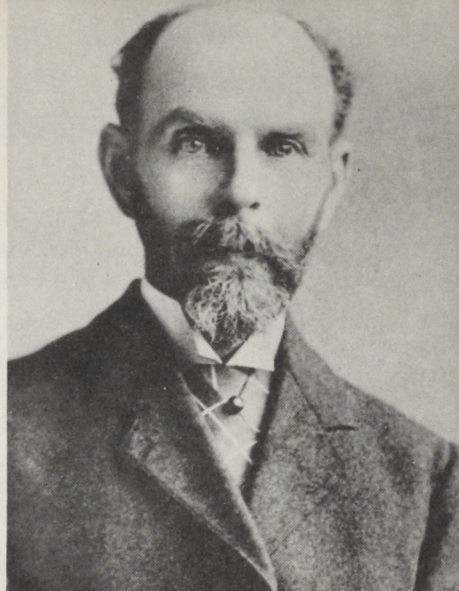
The contract for the erection of a building was placed with K. A. McLeod, an early Edmonton contractor. This first Johnstone Walker store was located on Fraser Ave. (later 98 St.) and served both as a

Jasper Avenue looking East in 1892. W. Johnstone Walker's Manchester House was located on the North side on the present location of the National Home Furniture.



place of business and a residence for Mr. Walker and his family. Long since removed by the inevitable march of progress, the building stood just East of the old Civic Block.

On October 20th, 1886, The Edmonton Bulletin carried Johnstone Walker's first advertisement, one column wide by about four inches deep, announcing that Johnstone Walker was "able to offer a varied assortment of splendid English goods at prices hitherto unknown in the North-West" and "confidently invited inspection, assured that the quality of the goods and extremely low prices will lead to numerous orders". Available, too, was "a well assorted stock of first-class goods from leading Canadian Houses".



W. Johnstone Walker

The Pattern Is Established

THUS DID Mr. Walker establish a policy that has been followed to this day. In the seventy-five years that have come and gone since Mr. Walker first opened his door to the public, quality and value have been the first requirements. Unswerving adherence to this aim of the founder has been the key to the company's growth and success.

In the six years that followed the firm of W. Johnstone Walker grew and prospered and established a reputation for honesty and fair dealing. Edmonton was incorporated as a town in 1892 and although the population numbered only a few hundred persons, already there stirred the rumblings that foretold the tremendous growth to come.

In that year, 1892, Johnstone Walker moved into a building located on Jasper Avenue, then a broad but muddy street that looked little like the important thoroughfare that it would become in later years. Situated on the present site of the National Home Furniture Limited, this new store was about 25 feet by 50 feet, and enabled Mr. Walker to add new lines and greatly expand the old ones. In view of the fact that much of his merchandise came from Manchester, the hub of England's great textile industry, he dubbed it Manchester House.

Still the theme of the best quality and lowest



possible prices was maintained and Mr. Walker's business grew and grew. Early Edmontonians liked his way of doing business and his wide selections of merchandise that were carefully chosen to suit the needs of the day.

Slowly but surely Edmonton was being recognized in the outside world as the key point in the North-West Territories. Although the city had been linked with the outside by telegraph since 1876, there was no direct transportation system to serve the area until the railway reached Strathcona (now South Edmonton) in 1891. This eased the problems of transporting goods and supplies to a fast growing community and spelled the doom of the long wagon trains with their straining oxen and groaning wheels. It was to be another 22 years—in 1913—before the soaring structure of the High Level bridge was to bring the first C.P.R. train across the North Saskatchewan River to Edmonton proper.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| OFFICE | W. JOHNSTONE WALKER | Edmonton, Alberta Edmonton, opposite |
| ed be ab- | Has now opened his new premises on Fraser Avenue as a | O'CONNOR BARRIS' |
| TOCK. | GENERAL STORE. | Parliamentary Special attention ness and the issu D. O'CONNOR. |
| | W. J. W., having secured the services of an experienced buyer in England is able to offer a varied assortment of | W. WILSON |
| | SPLENDID ENGLISH GOODS, | DENT Rooms over J. trance at side doc Rink. |
| At prices hitherto unknown in the North-West. | Also a well assorted stock of first-class goods from | JASPER HOUSE The only bri First-class weekly able rates. Goo J. GOODRIDGE, |
| be sold, marked they will | LEADING CANADIAN HOUSES, | ROYAL HOTEL to be the leading expense or pains torsi will be spared Class. Public put ted. |
| , having e profits | Including Dry Goods, Clothing, Hosiery, Flannels, Cottons, Blankets, Woollen Goods, Shawls, Millinery, Laces, Ribbons, Feathers, Artificial flowers, Books, Stationery, Toys and Fancy Goods. | EDMONTON H. entertainmen An extensive add establishment wh commodation to n alling public. A Good stabling at Proprietor. |
| s. GALL. | Also Furniture of every description, Carpets, Matting, Floor Cloths and Bedding of all kinds. | |
| | Also a splendid assortment of Crockery, etc., etc. | |
| | W. J. W. confidently invites inspection, assured that the quality of the goods and the extremely moderate prices will lead to numerous orders. | |
| | TERMS STRICTLY CASH. | |
| | POSITIVELY NO EXCEPTIONS. | |
| | W. JOHNSTONE WALKER, | |
| | DIRECT IMPORTER OF ENGLISH GOODS, | |
| | EDMONTON. | |

Johnstone Walker's first advertisement in The Edmonton Bulletin of October 20, 1886. Actual size was one column by about four inches deep. The Edmonton Bulletin had been established by Frank Oliver about six years previously. A few years after this advertisement appeared Johnstone Walker was the first store in Edmonton to run a daily advertisement using different copy each day.



The Johnstone Walker store of 1905, decorated for the inauguration of Alberta as a province. This building occupied the same site as Manchester House which was moved to Jasper Avenue and what is now 100A St.

Cecil S. Sutherland Joins the Store

A MILESTONE IN THE history of the store was marked in 1896 when, on May 2nd, Mr. Walker engaged the services of a young man of 17—an association that was destined to continue to the present day. Born in Trackadie, N.S., in 1878, Cecil Sutherland came West with his family, lived in Red Deer for two years where his mother taught school . . . and finally settled in Edmonton. His instinct for retailing made him firm friends with Mr. Walker whose failing health soon made it necessary to add more and more responsibilities on the shoulders of this young man from Nova Scotia. The store continued to grow and prosper. In that year, 1896, the total sales volume amounted to \$12,000; no small amount in the days when a few dollars could outfit an entire family.

Life in Edmonton in those days was for the hardy. No paved streets graced this young town; only wooden sidewalks and crosswalks kept the feet of the citizens out of the tenacious gumbo. It was a sprawling town peopled by sturdy pioneers who found the drive and initiative to overcome the obstacles and hardships. Recreation was of one's own making, and life, though not filled with the luxuries that other communities enjoyed, was pleasant and not too hurried.



In 1897 came the rush to the Klondike gold fields. Thousands of eager gold-seekers detained at Strathcona to cross the river and set up their camps on the river flats while they outfitted themselves for the long and arduous trek to the Yukon. Many of these seekers of the precious yellow metal were outfitted by Mr. Sutherland at Johnstone Walker's. Of the thousands who passed through Edmonton to seek their fortunes, a few succeeded in wresting riches from the earth, many perished from the hardships of the journey and many returned to Edmonton to make their homes. Many others returned whence they came—but all carried to the outside world news of the possibilities to be found in this lively community sprawled on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. Edmonton became known to thousands and growth followed fast upon knowledge. By 1901 Edmonton was a bustling community of some three thousand souls.



Young Cecil Sutherland, at the age of 19, was appointed manager by Mr. Walker, whose increasingly poor health made it necessary for him to retire from active participation in the business. In 1902 he returned to South Africa for a time, leaving Mr. Sutherland, at the age of 24, in complete charge of the fast-growing business. Mr. Walker's original policies were scrupulously followed and the firm of Johnstone Walker became known far and wide for their straightforward business dealings and attained an enviable reputation in the community.



Later in 1902 expansion again became necessary and plans were made for a new building to be erected on the same site. To clear the lot for the start of construction, the old building was to be moved along Jasper Avenue to what is now 100A St., just beside the Bank of Nova Scotia. Mr. Sutherland relates that during this move Johnstone Walker enjoyed the finest business location in all of Edmonton. A sudden rain mired the building deep in the infamous gumbo of Jasper Avenue and there it remained for a whole week before it could continue its journey.

A handsome brick building was erected and business resumed at an ever-increasing pace. The old building remained at its "temporary" site for many years until it was demolished in 1956 to make way for the expansion of the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Part of the upper floor of the new building was rented. One of the rented offices gave birth to the now famous Alberta College. To keep pace with the growth of business Mr. Sutherland enlarged again and again until the store boasted a frontage of 50 feet. Eventually all of the second floor was utilized for selling space.



By 1912 Johnstone Walker's store had enlarged to include the entire building . . . 263 to 267 Jasper Avenue.

Edmonton Forges Ahead

ALBERTA BECAME a province in 1905 to the tune of great rejoicing and in that year Edmonton experienced a tremendous land boom. Buildings mushroomed everywhere . . . the population soared, spurred by the great wave of immigration from the European countries, to about 25,000 by 1911. Edmonton had become a city in 1904, and in 1912, amalgamated with the City of Strathcona. This giant step forward welded the two communities into a thriving city of more than 50,000. More railways reached the city, the University of Alberta was already well established and widely known; came the theatre, the street cars, the automobile began to chug the wide streets. Edmonton had truly come into its own.

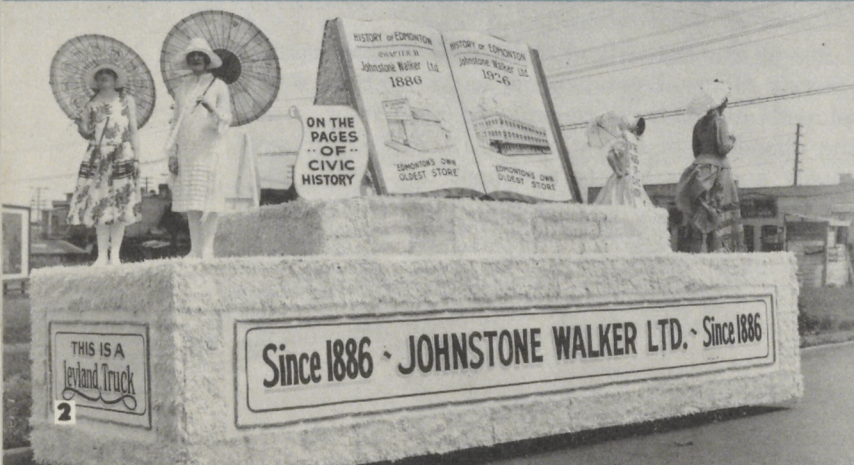
Under the guidance of Mr. Sutherland, Johnstone Walker kept pace with the times; the store's range of goods grew wider, more staff was employed and new systems were installed to increase the efficiency of operation. In 1912 Mr. Walker passed away and was laid to rest here in Edmonton. After his death Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Walker's son, Graham, reorganized the company with Mr. Sutherland as Managing Director. Mr. Graham Walker returned to Scotland to pursue his career and has since paid occasional visits to the city.





The Edmonton in years gone by

1. Looking south on 102 St. from Jasper Ave. in 1919. Formerly the Acme Department Store operated by Revillon Freres, Johnstone Walker's moved into this building in 1915.
2. Johnstone Walker's float in the Exhibition parade of 1926. Two of the models on the float, Miss E. Maloy and Mrs. D. Colina, are still with the store.
3. Johnstone Walker's advertisement in The Morning Journal of November 2, 1902. The same issue carried news that Canada's Council of Women would support Britain's suffragettes by going to jail, "if necessary."
4. Typical ox-carts that brought much of the merchandise to Johnstone Walker's store before the coming of the railroad in 1891.
5. The Johnstone Walker staff picnic at Alberta Beach on August 2, 1917.
6. The Jasper Ave. of 1904 during the Labour Day parade.
7. An early display of Johnstone Walker's in which a portion of the shoe department was re-created.



THE MORN'G JOURNAL, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1902

CURB THE KAISER

German Fleet Suggests
Unlikely of our
Last Victory.

SEVERE CRITICISM

Reference to the Yellow Peril
is likely to antagonize
the Japanese.

VOTES

Will be a great
victory for the
British.

QUEEN

Would be a
great victory for
the British.

THE KAISER

Will be a great
victory for the
British.

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the Store that Sells for Low

FURS of S AND QUAL

With the coming of real winter weather and an
becomes an important one. Furs in this country
comfort, and the question of what to wear, and
be solved by a visit to our big store where the
goods are on display, and where our unexcelled
spot each customer enables us to offer you values
the west. A visit will convince you that your fur

Women's Fur Lined

In a splendid range of styles, colors, navy, brown, beige,
go hand with culture and covers of natural mink. Colored
styles of new and up-to-date. Prices according to quality fur

Women's Natural Rat Coats

Made of good black skins, deep and well
lined, made in a style and with wide col-
lars and severe and elegant girdles, good
range of sizes.

Price, each \$55.00

Isab-la Fox Fur

Women's sublimely Fox and Oppenheim
Throw and Ruffs, made to match each
range of sizes.

Prices 9.50 to 20.00



Natural Mink Furs

Women's Natural Mink Furs, Thawes, Stiles and Ruffs
made of the best quality natural Canadian Mink, trimmed
with hems and tails. Muffs to match.

Prices 40.00 to 60.00

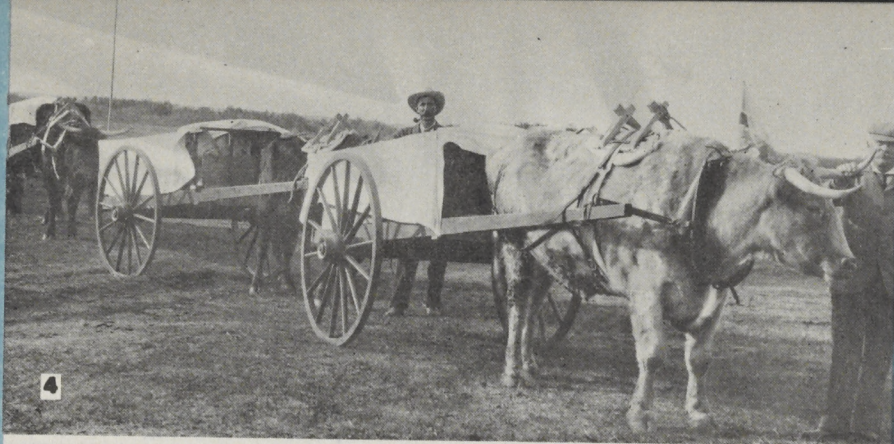
Alaska Sable Furs

Women's Thawes, Stiles, Ruffs and Muffs, made of
Alaska sable, a beautiful deep rich fur, natural color.
Muffs to match. Prices from 12.00 to 42.00

Ladies' Muffs 2.50 to 6.00

W. JOHNSTONE WALKER

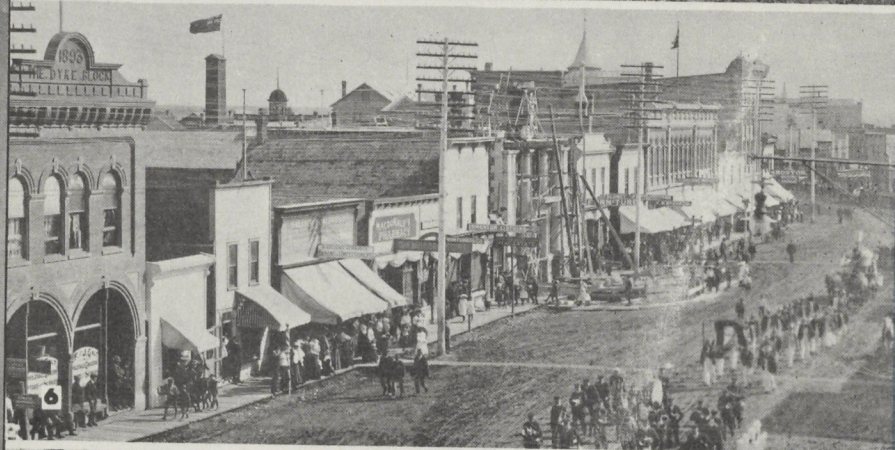
Scene



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7

lowest Prices

STYLE LITY

now, the question of Furs
are almost necessary for
st where to buy can best
and the best in fur
trading facilities and
if you cannot duplicate in
furs should be bought here.

Coats

green and black, or Katu-
green Alaska saddle - tan,
ton. - 60.00 to 100.00

Coats with Fur Collars

showing a particularly good
Women's Cash Coat, with
a great warm coat at a mod-
ern, and from, brown, black,
or quilted lining, collar
German mink, Columbia
sable, in a great range of
made, thoroughly serviceable
coats, prices according to

25.00 to 43.00

Grey Squirrel Furs

Women's Grey Squirrel
Muffs and Throws, made
of deep well furled skins,
very dainty.

each 12.00 to 24.00

Marmot Mink Furs

This is a very dainty, fine
looking but closely seam-
ing the much more ex-
pensive natural mink. We
have a big range of Mar-
mot mink Throws, Ruffs,
Collars and Muffs, trim-
med with heads and tails.

Prices 7.50 to 40.00

American Stone Martens

Closely resembling the
natural stone marten. We
show a range of Ruffs and
Muffs in this pretty fur.
Each 9.50 to 10.50

Red Fox Sets

Real - Canadian (Red
Fox Ruffs and Muffs,
trimmed with real heads
and brushes, making a
beautiful dainty set.
Ruff and Muff 24.00

Russian Hare Furs

Brown Russian Hare
Skins, quality No. 1, large
deep furred very warm.
Price 2.75 to 6.00

Belgian Coney Furs

Women's and Misses
Horse Collars, made in
three different sizes of
deep full fur collar for
size and wear, the best
value we have in low-
priced furs, in storm col-
lar style. Muffs to match.
Each 2.75 to 2.50

Special Value
in Ladies Fur
Lined Coats

The Founder's Policies Are Continued

BEHIND every step, behind every transaction lay Mr. Walker's original policies—his insistence that only better quality goods be offered to the public. Never was shoddy merchandise allowed to enter the store and every effort was made to ensure that prices were competitive. More and more people came to know that it cost no more to shop the store where they could get the best of everything. A high calibre of sales staff was employed and a spirit of friendly, helpful service was encouraged. Many of Johnstone Walker's staff have been with the company only a few years less than Mr. Sutherland. Today, this same spirit of friendliness still pervades the modern Johnstone Walker store, where leisurely shopping can be enjoyed in the comfortable atmosphere that has made Johnstone Walker known as Edmonton's Own Store! Merchandise is still chosen as carefully as ever to ensure that Johnstone Walker offers the finest in quality and fashion—first!



Left—the Fabric Department of 1915. For many years Johnstone Walker have been famous for their fine selections of better quality imported and domestic fabrics.

Right—a summer tableau of sportswear in a display window of the World War I era.





Johnstone Walker's present Downtown store on the corner of Jasper Ave. and 102 St. — the crossroads of Edmonton's busy downtown section.

The Business Section Grows Westward

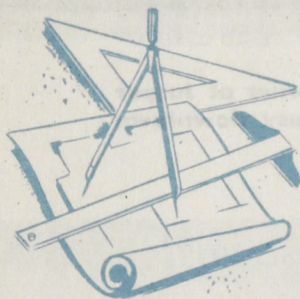
EDMONTON'S expansion moved the business district in a westerly direction along Jasper Avenue. The city was now the supply centre for the opening North country and the populated and fertile mixed farming areas surrounding it. To meet the need for yet more space, Johnstone Walker, in 1915, moved to their present downtown location at the corner of Jasper Avenue and 102 St. This three-storey building was owned by Revillon Freres who had, in the years previous, operated the Acme Department Store on the site. This building gave Johnstone Walker the much-needed space for expansion. Buyers scoured the Eastern markets for the best there was available and only the best was selected to be offered to Edmontonians. Merchandise was still imported from Great Britain and other European countries, yet Johnstone Walker made every effort to support Alberta industry. Many Alberta manufacturers can claim to long years of business with Johnstone Walker.

Once again the business outgrew the space and, in 1920, the adjacent building, the Heiminck Block, was leased to bring the total floor space to about 28,000 square feet. This building was purchased outright in 1948.

Thus did Johnstone Walker enter the roaring twenties . . . a store with a rich pioneer background, a store that had grown side by side with this flourishing City. Through the dismal years of the Great Depression, the anxious times of World War II, Johnstone Walker continued to meet the demands of Edmontonians for better quality at fair prices.



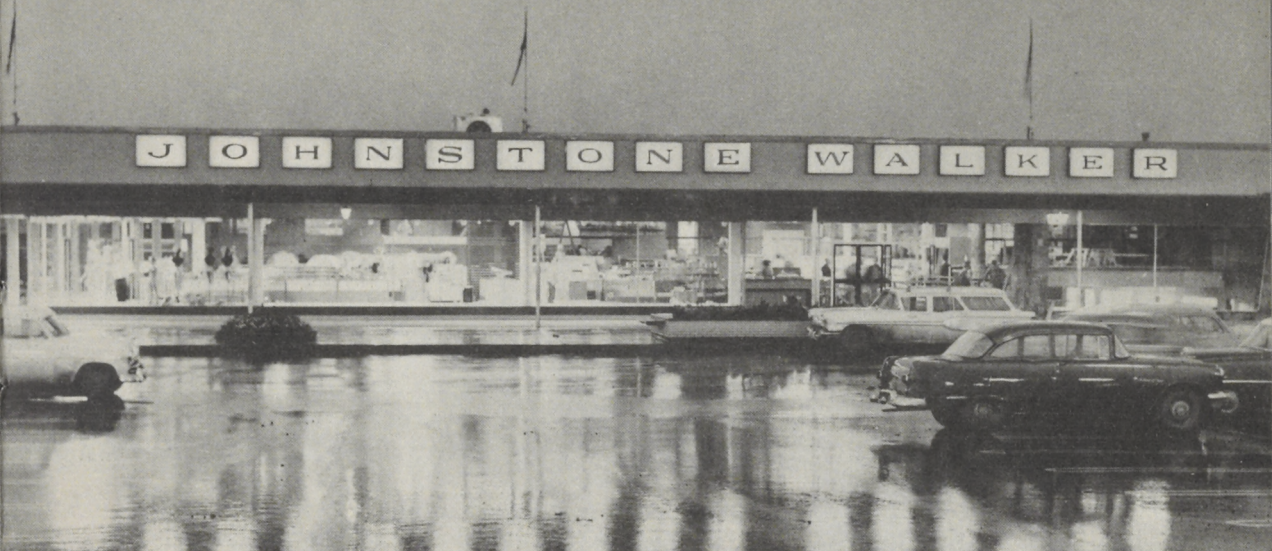
In 1953 the store underwent a complete remodelling inside and outside. A handsome new facade now looks out on Edmonton's busiest intersection and throughout the store each department was modernized and tastefully decorated. The original elevator had been installed in the building in 1906. It, too, was replaced by a smooth-running semi-automatic model. The motor and electrical apparatus of the old one, still in fine working order, was donated to the electrical department of Victoria Composite High School. After 47 years of service it was a tribute to the skill and ingenuity of the early craftsmen.



In the boom after the Second World War, the discovery of oil at Leduc and the consequent increase in population, Edmonton once again experienced a growth that was staggering. Even the wide, wide streets became congested with the ever-increasing traffic and parking became a seemingly insoluble problem. With the development of the suburban areas, the decision was made to open a second store in the Bonnie Doon Shopping Centre at 83 St. and 82 Ave. Along with this decision was the determination to make this new store not just a minor branch of the Downtown store, but a store of unsurpassed beauty and customer convenience. There followed many months of research, of selecting designs, of solving problems before construction was begun. Finally, on August 20th, 1959, the new store was opened, gleaming, ultra-modern and attractive. Johnstone Walker feel justifiably proud of this handsome store—even now years ahead of its time in modern design and pleasing decor. More about this store later in this booklet.

Still the guiding hand of Mr. Cecil S. Sutherland directs the operation of these two stores. A far cry indeed, from the day, over 65 years ago, when he first reported for work at the small wooden building on Jasper Avenue. For 65 years Mr. Sutherland has built on the foundations laid down by our founder—and the ever-increasing stream of Johnstone Walker shoppers surely indicates that both the foundation and the building were well and truly done. Today, our president, Mr. Sutherland is 83 years of age—65 of them spent in his association with Edmonton's Own Store!





A spectacular night photograph of Johnstone Walker's store in the Bonnie Doon Shopping Centre.

The Bonnie Doon Store

LOCATED IN THE heart of the city's largest shopping centre at 82 Ave. and 83 St., Johnstone Walker's Bonnie Doon store is beautiful inside and out . . . a store that's as modern as tomorrow. Clean sweeping lines accentuate the uncluttered look and the deft use of color and light bring a warmth and friendliness to the Alberta fieldstone, the mosaic tile and stainless steel that is used so advantageously through the store.

The product of long months of research into the problem of how best to serve the needs of rapidly growing South Edmonton, this gleam-

A general view from the mezzanine of the Bonnie Doon store shows the attractive displays and counter layout.



**The Men's and Boys'
Shoe department on
the lower level.**



ing store was opened on August 20th, 1959. The attractive layout combined with the vivid use of color and tasteful displays have made it a popular shopping spot for residents of the South Side.

With a frontage of 152 feet and a depth of 121 feet, the store offers about 21,000 square feet of shopping space and is built on a unique tri-level plan. The mezzanine houses an attractive tea lounge, ladies' and children's shoes, fabrics, china and linens; the main floor is devoted to the needs of children and ladies while on the lower level is a complete selection of clothing and footwear for men and boys.

Although completely modern in architecture and decor, the Bonnie Doon store still reflects the principles laid down by the founder 75 years ago . . . with the emphasis on quality merchandise at down-to-earth prices. The same friendly atmosphere and personal service as found in the Downtown store prevails at Johnstone Walker Bonnie Doon.

The beautiful store, the casual, leisurely shopping and a fine selection of the newest in fashion have combined to make a shopping trip to Johnstone Walker Bonnie Doon something to enjoy.



**Left—The colorful fountain just
inside the main entrance. The
stairway leads to the mezzanine.**

**Right—the relaxing atmosphere
of the Tea Lounge is a popular
place for a refreshing snack
while shopping.**



T. S. A. Sutherland Eases Father's Load

FOR OVER 60 years the destinies of Johnstone Walker have been guided by Mr. Cecil Sutherland but in recent years many of the details of the operation of a growing concern have been transferred to the shoulders of his son, Sydney Sutherland.

With a family background of retailing, Mr. Syd has been trained in merchandising from an early age. Over twenty-five years ago he began work in the downtown store as a stock boy. In those days he worked part-time in the store while attending the University of Alberta. He cleaned windows, operated the switchboard, ran the elevator . . . learned thoroughly the inner workings of a large store before progressing to merchandising. Working in every department has given him a keen insight into the standards of quality and service that are the Johnstone Walker tradition.

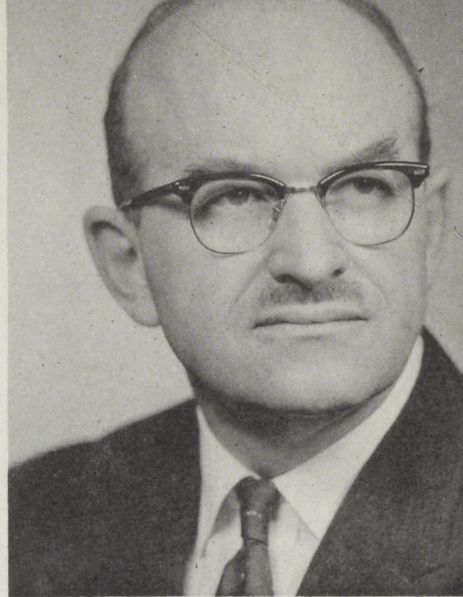
As he assumed more and more responsibilities he was appointed Vice-President and Managing Director and today a great portion of the day-to-day workings of the store are under his supervision.

An enthusiastic supporter of the aims of the founder, he jealously guards the reputation of the store for providing quality goods at sensible prices that mean extra value for every customer.

The JW Family of Employees

JOHNSTONE WALKER is a family store in more than one sense. Not only is it family owned, it's a family shopping store, too. In addition it is also the home of a large family of employees whose spirit of co-operation and helpfulness have contributed much to the growth and development of the store. Some employees can boast of service only a few years less than Mr. Cecil Sutherland—many more have spent twenty-five and even thirty years with the company. Fine working conditions and excellent relations between staff and management have been most conducive to a pleasant shopping atmosphere.

Johnstone Walker is proud of its family of employees . . . proud of their loyalty and the part they have played in the success of Edmonton's Own Store.



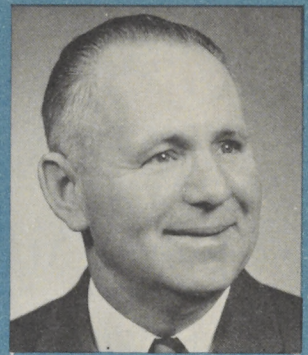
T. S. A. Sutherland
Vice-President and Managing
Director



MRS. K. DUNLOP
25 years



MR. R. ENGEL
32 years



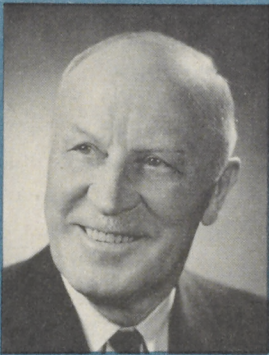
MR. E. SEARLE
40 years

Johnstone Walker's Long Service Employees

Pictured here are ten JW employees whose continuous service with the store ranges from twenty-five to forty-nine years.



MISS D. McKEEVER
33 years



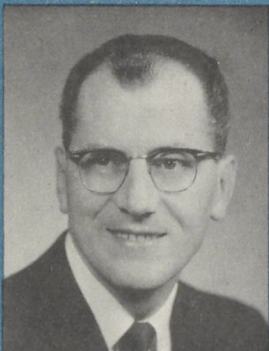
MR. N. CAMPBELL
31 years



MISS M. MCGREGOR
49 years



MRS. M. BENNIE
40 years



MR. A. HAMILTON
25 years



MISS E. MALOY
45 years



MRS. D. COLINA
25 years

a c k n o w l e d g m e n t s

Our sincere thanks to the people whose help and co-operation enabled us to secure the photographs used in this booklet.

PHOTO CREDITS

Glenbow Foundation, The McDermid Collection—pages 2, 7, 8-9 numbers 1, 5 and 7; 10-left.

Alberta Government, The Ernest Brown Collection, pages 3, 5, 8-9 numbers 4, 6.

McDermid Studios—pages 1, 11, 13 bottom, 14, 15 and 16.

Goertz Studios—page 13 top.



Two Fine Stores To Serve You
DOWNTOWN and BONNIE DOON

JW **JOHNSTONE**
ALKER ...

E D M O N T O N , A L B E R T A